



CHRIS TAYLOR

STATE REPRESENTATIVE ♦ 76th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

November 1, 2019

VIA REGULAR MAIL

The Honorable Barbara Barrett
Secretary of the Air Force
United States Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington DC, 20330-1670

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Mr. Ramon Ortiz
NGB/A4AM
3501 Fetchet Ave.
Joint Base Andrews, MD
20762-5157

Dear Secretary Barrett and Mr. Ortiz,

As the State Representative for the 76th State Assembly District of Wisconsin, I again write to you in strong opposition to the U.S. Air Force's proposal to base F-35A military jets at the 115th Fighter Wing at Dane County Regional Airport (DCRA). Please consider this letter and attachment, in addition to my September 24, 2019 correspondence to Acting Secretary Donovan and Mr. Ramon Ortiz, and my October 18, 2019 correspondence with attachments to you as part of my formal comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement (dEIS). Unfortunately, my prior correspondence remain unanswered.

I represent some of Madison's neighborhoods and individuals who the Air Force predicts will be most negatively and substantially impacted by this proposal. It is highly inappropriate, and I believe unprecedented, to place such jets at an Air National Guard Base in such a dense, residential and urban environment, where an estimated 60,000 individuals live within three miles of the DCRA.

The district I represent strongly opposes this proposal, with 88% in opposition out of a total of 353 constituent contacts that I have received on this issue. The neighborhoods I represent that are substantially negatively impacted, including the Carpenter-Ridgeway neighborhood and the Darbo-Worthington neighborhood, are places where high percentages of people of color, low- and middle-income individuals and children live. These neighborhoods are accessible by public transit, more affordable and host public housing complexes. These are the communities who are least able to afford to move and least likely to have alternative housing choices.

Impacted neighborhoods around the airport, including Eken Park, have been revitalized and are thriving after years of work by dedicated residents. Placing F-35 jets in close proximity to these communities threatens the strides that have been made. The negative, local economic impact of placing F-35s in a dense residential and urban area has been ignored in the dEIS. I have already received a letter from a local small business about their intention to move from my community because of a potential increase in aircraft noise. I am also starting to hear people reconsider moving to our eastside community because of concern about F-35 noise. There are substantial

costs posed by F-35s to our east and north side communities in terms of quality of life, property values, and a healthy property tax base which provides needed funds for our city.

At a bare minimum, because the dEIS fails to consider critical information and consequences, I must again request that the Air Force produce a revised dEIS on which our community has an opportunity to comment and respond. Given your failure to respond to my repeated correspondence and the lack of essential information our community and state need to fully evaluate this proposal, to proceed with a final EIS and preclude further public comment would constitute a grave injustice. Attached to this letter is an outline of ten areas where the dEIS is inadequate that must be addressed.

At the end of this public comment period, members of my community and I have the same questions we had at the beginning: 1. How much louder will the F-35 be for our north and east side communities?; 2. What areas will be impacted under different flight and afterburner scenarios?; 3. What will be the duration and frequency of the noise on the proposed flight paths? The Air Force has the ability to configure additional noise maps that would be far more helpful than a day-night average sound level to estimate what the public could expect. Further, there were certain helpful charts included in prior EIS's, including for Burlington, Vermont that gave the community a much more comprehensive picture of the noise generated by F-35s in comparison to the F-16s at various points in takeoff and landing which were omitted in our dEIS but should be provided.

Other glaring deficiencies in the dEIS include a failure to consider the substantial impact F-35s could have on dozens of additional K-12 schools and day care centers in or closely around the intense noise area identified in the dEIS. You know the profound, negative impact intense aircraft noise has on children and their learning, and it is inconceivable that a more comprehensive, rigorous analysis was neglected.

But as important, the Air Force also should be well aware of the persistent, pernicious and continuing racial disparities in our city and state. A recent analysis showed that the opportunity gap between white and black students in Madison, reflected in 8th grade math scores and bachelor degree attainment, are the worst in the nation. Many of our most diverse schools, including Hawthorne Elementary, are in close proximity to areas predicted to experience the most extreme noise. The impact of this disruption to learning must be analyzed in the context of our continued racial inequities.

There is also no mention of the existing environmental contamination from PFAS, much of which originated from the Truax base and resulted in contaminated ground and soil. This necessitated closing a city well and warning individuals to refrain from fishing in Starkweather Creek. The military has been slow to respond and seriously address this pressing issue. We must hear an urgent plan to identify the scope of the problem and mitigate the pollution.

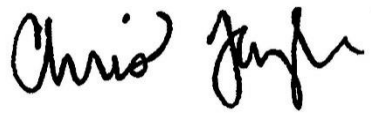
At the close of the public comment period, and after recently returning from Burlington, Vermont to learn more about that community's experience as F-35s are arriving, I have more concerns than ever about the impact this proposal has on my beloved community, and on the thousands of people who call the north or east side of Madison home. I have witnessed firsthand

the stress, uncertainty and chaos being caused in the Burlington communities impacted, and I do not wish that for mine.

Please do not base these F-35 jets in the middle of dense neighborhoods with schools and parks and people. At a minimum, please address the issues I raise in this letter and in previous correspondence. Afford the people an opportunity to get these questions asked, and to be heard before any final decision is made.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Taylor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Chris" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Taylor".

Representative Chris Taylor
76th Assembly District